



Economic Impact Analysis Virginia Department of Planning and Budget

6 VAC 20-60 – Rules Relating to Compulsory Minimum Training Standards for Dispatchers **Department of Criminal Justice Services** May 20, 2000

The Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) has analyzed the economic impact of this proposed regulation in accordance with Section 9-6.14:7.1.G of the Administrative Process Act and Executive Order Number 25 (98). Section 9-6.14:7.1.G requires that such economic impact analyses include, but need not be limited to, the projected number of businesses or other entities to whom the regulation would apply, the identity of any localities and types of businesses or other entities particularly affected, the projected number of persons and employment positions to be affected, the projected costs to affected businesses or entities to implement or comply with the regulation, and the impact on the use and value of private property. The analysis presented below represents DPB's best estimate of these economic impacts.

Summary of the Proposed Regulation

The Department of Criminal Justice Services (department) proposes to double the minimum number of hours of training for law-enforcement dispatchers. The department also proposes to add language that specifies required performance outcomes of successfully trained dispatchers.

Estimated Economic Impact

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO) recommends that public safety telecommunicators (dispatchers) receive a minimum of 40 hours of training.¹ The current Virginia regulations require a minimum of 40 hours of classroom training and 40 hours of on the job training for law enforcement dispatchers. Under the proposed

regulations, dispatchers are required to have at least 80 hours of classroom training and 80 hours of on the job training. Increasing the minimum amount of training would likely produce some benefits for the public. For example, better-trained dispatchers may be less likely to make mistakes when handling emergency calls from the public. There is insufficient data, though, to accurately estimate those benefits.

The department has not collected any information concerning the cost to localities of additional mandatory training hours. A representative of the Henrico County Police Training Academy believes that their academy already exceeds the new standards, and thus would not incur additional costs. The department does believe that several academies are not currently meeting the proposed new minimum. Due to the insufficient information concerning benefits of the increased training requirements and the absence of cost data, it is not possible to determine whether this proposed amendment creates net economic benefit.

The current regulations list general areas to be addressed in classroom and on the job training. The department proposes to eliminate the lists of general areas to be addressed and to introduce required performance outcomes for dispatchers while at a certified training academy and on the job. According to the department not all academies are currently ensuring that all important dispatching skills are acquired. The proposed requirement that specific performance outcomes are met may make it more likely that trainees do acquire the necessary dispatching skills during training. This proposed change would likely be beneficial to the extent that dispatcher trainees acquire necessary dispatching skills through meeting the proposed performance outcomes, that are not currently acquired in training under the current language.

Businesses and Entities Affected

The proposed revised regulations potentially affect the 10 regional and 17 independent academies that train dispatchers in Virginia, approximately 50 instructors that provide the training and approximately 500 individuals that attend training each year.²

¹ Source: "National Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Standard," from the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International web site, May 20, 2000.

² Source: The Department of Criminal Justice Services

Localities Particularly Affected

The proposed regulatory changes affect all Virginia localities.

Projected Impact on Employment

The proposed regulatory changes would approximately double the minimum number of hours that localities must employ instructors of dispatchers. The proposed regulations will also increase the number of work hours for which employers will need to hire replacements for dispatchers that are out being trained.

Effects on the Use and Value of Private Property

The proposed regulatory changes may result in better-trained dispatchers. To the extent that better-trained dispatchers are less likely to make mistakes and may more quickly properly handle incoming calls, damage or loss to private property may be averted. For example, a better-trained dispatcher may make it more likely that thieves are caught (through faster dispatching of law enforcement) and stolen property is recovered.